

3 Great Eagle Owls (*Bubo bubo*), from Mongolia, presented by A. L. Hall on December 10th.

JANUARY.

The number of registered additions to the Society's Menagerie during the month of January was 57. Of these 43 were acquired by presentation, 8 were received on deposit, 3 in exchange, and 3 were born in the Gardens.

The number of departures during the same period, by death and removals, was 123.

Amongst the additions special attention may be directed to:—

1 Anoa (*Anoa depressicornis*) ♀ from Celebes, and 1 Père David's Deer (*Elaphurus davidianus*) ♂ from Northern China, presented by H.G. The Duke of Bedford, K.G., Pres.Z.S., on January 20th and 26th.

2 Argentine Frogs (*Leptodactylus mystacinus*) and 6 South-American Sand-Toads (*Bufo arenarum*) from Cordova, Argentina, new to the Collection, presented by Wilfred A. Smithers, C.M.Z.S., on January 31st.

Mr. R. E. HOLDING exhibited the skull of a Roebuck, showing an unusual deviation in the direction of the suture of the right frontal bone, which extended considerably beyond the median line towards the left.

Mr. C. TATE REGAN, M.A., F.Z.S., exhibited, by means of lantern-slides, a series of drawings of larval Fishes from the Antarctic.

The development of *Myctophum antarcticum* was compared with that of the northern *M. glaciale*, and larval Nototheniidae were described.

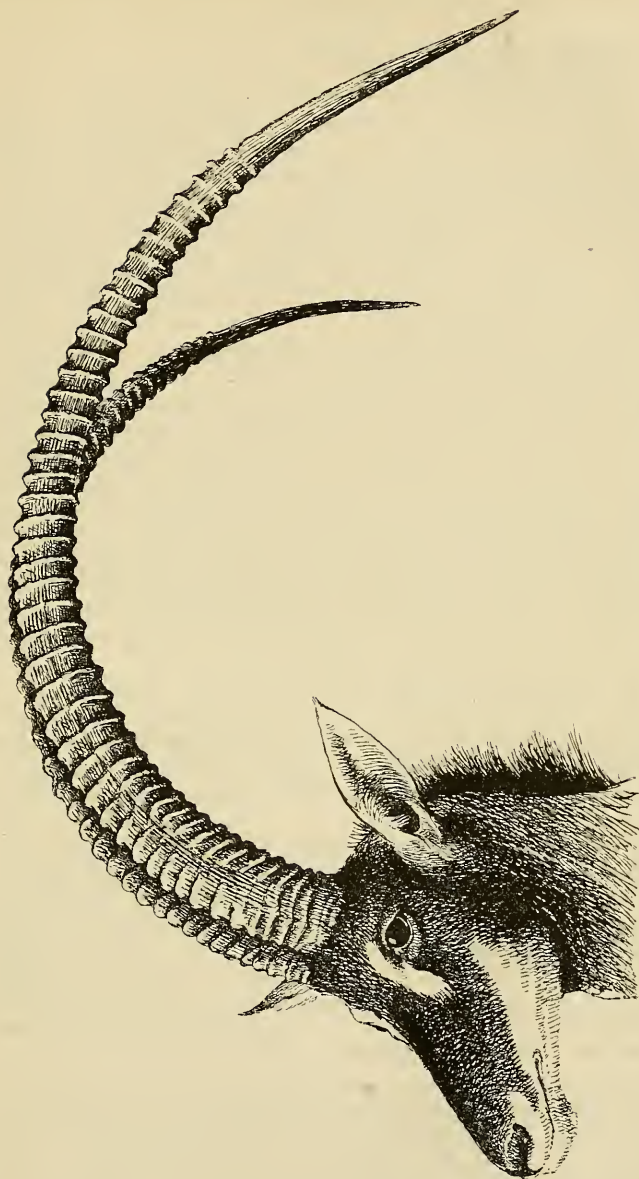
A new Sable Antelope from Angola *.

Mr. OLDFIELD THOMAS, F.R.S., F.Z.S., exhibited the scalp and frontlet, with horns, of a male Sable Antelope from the Luando River, Angola, which had been presented to the National Museum, together with a female mask and horns, by Mr. H. F. Varian.

This magnificent animal differed widely from the ordinary Sable, both by its immensely finer horns, and by the characters

* [The complete account of the new subspecies described in this communication appears here; but since the name and a preliminary diagnosis were published in the 'Abstract,' No. 151, 1916, it is distinguished by the name being underlined.—
EDITOR.]

Text-figure 1.



Head of Angolan Sable Antelope (*Hippotragus niger variani*).

of its face-marking, and Mr. Thomas proposed to distinguish it as a new subspecies under the name of

HIPPOTRAGUS * NIGER VARIANI †.

Thomas, Abstract P. Z. S. 1916, p. 1 (Feb. 15th).

The horns of the type measured 57 inches (1445 mm.) in length along the front curve, by 11 inches (280 mm.) in circumference at the base, and 27 inches from tip to tip. Their transverse ridges, which were extremely well marked, were 47 in number. Good Rhodesian and Nyasa Sable horns were about 45 to 50 inches in length, while those of the East African Sable were not known to reach 40 inches. The female horns of *H. n. variani* were 35 inches (890 mm.) in length by 7 inches (179 mm.) in circumference.

A skull of this form, which had been lent to Mr. Thomas for comparison, measured 480 mm. in length, 170 mm. in breadth, with an upper tooth-row of 122 mm., these dimensions in a skull of the ordinary Sable being respectively 435, 160, and 114 mm.

But, apart from its splendid horns, the most striking character of *H. n. variani* was the practically complete obliteration of the usual prominent white streaks running from the anteorbital white tufts forwards to the sides of the muzzle, the whole of the upper side of the face being therefore deep black, with the exception of the anteorbital tufts themselves, which were white as usual. Along the ordinary positions of the white streaks a few lighter hairs were perceptible, these being rather more numerous in the female.

The dark parts of the head were of the deepest black, the light parts buffy whitish or cream-colour, except the middle line of the interramia, which was white. Occiput mixed black and ferruginous-tawny. Ears, as usual, rich tawny outside, and white within. The face of the female was blackish brown, and the crown and occiput tawny.

It was with considerable hesitation that Mr. Thomas had only distinguished this Sable as a subspecies, and not as a species, so striking was the difference from ordinary Sables in both horns and marking; but the presence of light hairs along the usual position of the facial streaks, and the fact that in *H. n. kirkee* (figured by Matschie as *H. n. kauffmanni*), the nearest neighbour of *H. n. variani*, the dark stripes were broader and the light stripes narrower than in *H. n. niger*, showed that these markings were variable and plastic, and did not indicate any really

* This generic name was used provisionally pending the decision of the authorities as to the names suggested in 1914 for fixation by Fiat. Should *Hippotragus* be rejected, the technical name of the genus would be still in doubt until the question of the validity of *Egoceerus*, Desm. 1822, nec *Aegoceros*, Pall. 1811, was settled, a very knotty point. A law covering this latter case had been proposed by the Linnean Society's Committee on Nomenclature in 1906, and submitted to the International Congress, who, however, only accepted it as applying to specific names, a restriction much to be regretted.

† Type. Face, skin, and frontlet with horns. B.M. 16.2.21.1.

essential difference, such as to render unlikely the possibility that intermediates might yet be found.

To this subspecies there presumably belonged the well-known 61-inch horn in the Florence Museum, which had long been a wonder to all sportsmen, who had only had for comparison with it the relatively short horns of *H. n. niger*, those of the E. African *H. n. roosevelti* being still shorter.

Bocage's *Hippotragus niger*, in his papers on Angolan Mammals, was of course also *H. n. variani*, but his only material was a single pair of horns, 51 inches in length, brought home from the "interior of Mossamedes" by Welwitsch.

Mr. Varian had taken great pains to secure specimens of this animal, and to obtain information about its range, and it was with much pleasure that Mr. Thomas had named it in his honour. Mr. Varian had also taken steps to induce the local authorities to give it protection, which, in view of the considerable sums given for such horns as it carried, would be much needed to save it from extermination, now that its existence had become known to sportsmen and hunters.

Judging by the greater length of the skull, it would, no doubt, prove that *H. n. variani* not only carried longer horns, but was larger in all dimensions than the true Sable. It was hoped that a complete specimen of this splendid addition to the list of African Antelopes would soon be obtained for the National Museum, whose warmest thanks were already due to Mr. Varian for the donation of the fine trophy now exhibited.

Antlers of a Virginian Deer affected by Cancer.

Mr. R. I. Pocock, F.R.S., F.Z.S., Curator of Mammals, exhibited the successive Antlers of a Virginian Deer (*Odocoileus americanus*) that had died of cancer in the Society's Gardens, and made the following remarks:—

"The male Virginian Deer (*Odocoileus americanus*) referred to in Prof. Plimmer's report (see p. 83, 16) as having died of cancer, was purchased as a young animal on Jan. 17th, 1911, and died Dec. 27th, 1915. The following accurate records of its successive antlers were kept during the five years that it lived in the Gardens:—

1. The first antlers, shed March 15th, 1912, were simple snags about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in length.
2. The second antlers, shed March 23rd, 1913, measured $10\frac{1}{4}$ inches along outer curve, were simply forked at the tip; the supernumerary tine on the back of the beam measured just under $1\frac{3}{4}$ inch, and the two antlers together weighed $5\frac{1}{4}$ oz.
3. The third antlers, shed March 24th, 1914, measured 9 inches, were simple, carrying no supplementary tine. The two together weighed $4\frac{1}{4}$ oz.